
Title: By Its Cover

Author: Journalist

Dealthagar rolled his eyes.
“You must be joking.”

The mayor of Moonglow
set his jaw and leaned
forward on his desk. “I
have never been more
serious.”

“It’s a book. I’m even
granting that it is a
powerful one, but it is
still a book.” Dealthagar
shifted in the
uncomfortable chair. “To
even insinuate that it is
intelligent is...”

“The truth.” GreyPawn
straightened himself. “All
of the artifacts are
powerful, but the book
dwarfs the other two. I
have conducted extensive
research on it, and I
believe my findings to be
sound.”

Dealthagar and Anna
looked at each other. No
words were needed.
Neither of them saw his
statement as remotely
conceivable. The magics of
Sosaria simply did not
contain the power levels
needed to create magical
intelligence. The few
objects of such power on
the orb did not originate
from this plane of
existence, and the book
was innately tied to
Sosaria. “My readings
will tell me what I need
to know.”

“That is, if the book

allows itself to be gauged in the manner you speak of.” The mayor of Moonglow steepled his fingers. “The book may not allow itself to manifest out of the Lycaeum.”

“Ah, yes. The Lycaeum. You believe it to be an extension of the book? Myself, Rune Artisem and a few others have entered the Lycaeum and suffered no effects. We are obviously not of the virtues. Why would it allow it?” Dealthagar was beginning to grow impatient.

“No, I believe the Lycaeum is part and parcel of the book. An expression of the truth contained within. The book does what it does and allows what it allows for its own reasons. I have studied it, but I would deign not to assume I know its intentions.”

“Regardless, I need not even touch the book.” The Technomancer looked over to his companion. She shared his frustration. This was their second visit to the mayor’s headquarters about seeing the book, and he still seemed hesitant. “My equipment will take all the readings needed in a few minutes and we will be done. The process is easy and not invasive in any way.”

GreyPawn sat back in his chair and pursed his lips. “I am still not comfortable with the idea. I do not know how the Book will react to being poked and prodded. The

concept of making a duplicate is ludicrous.”

“Never-the-less, I will try. Technomancy is capable of far more than anyone imagines. As I said the book will not be touched in any way. The readings will be taken remotely and no harm will come to the book. I assure you of this.” He was beginning to lose his temper.

“Your assurances are unneeded. No harm CAN come to the book, but fine then. I will allow you to take these readings, but I must be present when you take them, and I want a full report of anything you discover.”

“Of course!” Anna smiled. “We would be honored to share our findings with an ally.”

“When would you want to do these...readings?” GreyPawn looked over his allies nervously.

“What better time then now. It will only take a few minutes and then you can put your nervousness behind you.” Dealthagar stood. “Shall we?”

GreyPawn’s mouth went tight. “Hrrmph. Very well. Follow me.” They were led on a short jaunt to the teleporter in the south, taking them to town. Another few steps and they were in front of the majestic Lycaeum. GreyPawn led them to the hiding spot